

Course description (syllabus) & other information

Course title: EA109, History of the Culture of Tea in China and Japan
Semester: Spring 2013
Instructor: John R. Wallace
Meets: MWF 1–2PM

Course description

Using tea as a way of analyzing cultural formations and culture formation

This class is about the cultures of two countries — China and Japan — and the relationship of tea to certain cultural practices in those countries. Broadly stated, we begin with the early tea origin myths of China, then become more earnest in our analysis with events in the Tang and Song dynasties. While we cover briefly Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties our focus swings towards Japan in the second half of the course where we look at tea practices in the Kamakura, Muromachi and early Edo periods. I also make some overview and summary statements about tea in Korea. This is primarily a history of culture class and we spend little time with tea-related issues later than the 18th century.

We read early Chinese cosmology, Chinese poetry, track the impact of Buddhism on the diffusion and advancement of various cultural practices, look at interpretations of tea in painting traditions, consider the relationship between tea culture and technological advances in ceramics, explore the two different times tea was introduced to Japan and what happened to tea when it was thus introduced, consider the relationship between political power centers, Japanese tea masters, and tea-related objects d'art, and analyze how the poetics developed within the linked-verse tradition of Japan found expression in tea house & garden architecture.

Tea has a long and complex history in both China and Japan. It has been part of philosophical, religious, and literary discourse, and had influence on, as well as been influenced by visual arts and artisan crafts, architecture, and social practices. Comparing its role in this way in these two countries illuminates interesting similarities and differences. Further, studying how tea arrived to Japan from China and the different way it was embraced in that country provides an opportunity to consider how these two countries interacted with one another in terms of cultural transmission. Finally, there is an interesting tension between the ordinariness of brewing and drinking tea with the arts and philosophy that have been attached to it. This class looks at idea crossovers such as how philosophy has created contexts for thinking about tea (Tang China) and how poetics helped form tea-related social practice (Muromachi Japan), among other things.

Said briefly, understanding the many turns in the development of tea culture in China and Japan from the three perspectives outlined above (a content comparative approach while keeping also in mind the interaction between the two countries and while exploring how ideas crossed over between tea and many cultural practices) ...

- ◇ ... informs students of important and enduring aspects of both cultures,
- ◇ ... provides an opportunity to discuss the role of religion and art in social practice (and vice versa),
- ◇ ... provides a forum for cultural comparison, and,
- ◇ ... provides an example of the relationship between the two countries as well as Japanese methods of importing and naturalizing another country's social practice.

Tea basics

That being said, it seems to me odd if, at the end of a class on tea, the student did not know the basics of the tea plant itself—its name, where it grows, and how crafting of the leaves gives us the many types of tea that we drink. So the first few sessions of the class are devoted to covering these basics.

Balanced approach

It is the explicit goal of this course that all students consider both China and Japan with equal care and curiosity. For many this will mean working sometimes outside a comfort zone. However, all grading is from this perspective. Showing interest in only one culture will be viewed as having done much less than half the work of the course and will score similarly.

Grade weights

This class focuses on performance on tests. The next more important factor is the term essay. The presentation is 10% of the grade, but this is graded generally and is open-topic. There is no attendance or participation grade; however, poor attendance will show in the final essay that relies on information presented only in class for both its content and how it was delivered.

Course prerequisites

This class has no prerequisites.

Please note ...

This syllabus contains critical information about course content, procedures, policies and grade calculations. It covers the material that is unlikely to change during the term. Other details are on the web pages. I suggest you read this syllabus carefully and review it once or twice during the term. I assume that you understand its content so please contact me if you don't.

	old		new
Midterm 01	20.00%	Midterm 01	15.00%
Midterm 02	20.00%	Midterm 02	15.00%
		Midterm 03	15.00%
Final	30.00%	Final	25.00%
Presentation	10.00%	Presentation	10.00%
Term paper	20.00%	Term paper	20.00%
	100.00%		100.00%

In this syllabus are statements that influence your grade. While you should read this document in full, I will list here a few of the items that are not necessarily "intuitive" and which can have significant impact on your grade:

- ◆ Announcements: I do NOT make all relevant announcements in class, even important ones. Visit the [Announcements Page](#) frequently.
- ◆ Academic honesty is important to me. Please read my [Web page](#) on this by the end of the first week and always keep those principles in mind. Please act honorably in class.
- ◆ Students who attend regularly, are attentive while in class, and avoid multitasking during class generally receive better grades even if one can skip the above items and still perform very well on the exams.
- ◆ I have "bright lines" for submission times: something arriving at 1:01PM for a 1PM deadline is late.
- ◆ Skimming instructions, schedules and such can hurt your grade. I sometimes have very specific instructions either for pedagogical reasons or file management at my end.
- ◆ Correct subject lines in emails are critically important (see below).
- ◆ Grades are reported as a number, not a letter, where A = 12, A- = 11 and so on.
- ◆ Note my treatment of extra credit activity stated in the grade category descriptions.

Communicating

How to reach me

Office hours: Please use the link on the [Announcements Page](#).

My office is [Dwinelle 5110](#).

My email is jwallace@berkeley.edu.

ALL emails for this class should follow this subject line template (note the underlines!):

EA109_assignmenttag_LASTNAME_classname keyword

See Home Course Page sidebar "OH & EMAIL ME" for definitions of assignmenttag, classname, and keyword. Note that the abbreviation is **not** [EALC109](#).

- ◆ I usually do not check email after 6:30PM and check less-frequently during weekends.

This class uses two Web sites (www.tabine.info/~tabine & bSpace.berkeley.edu) for announcements, schedules and materials access

This class uses a primary and secondary Web site. Below is a table explaining what material is where. (Off-campus individuals following my class via podcast, please email me. I might be creating a special site for this group since you do not automatically have access to the bSpace site):

PRIMARY <i>Announcements Page</i> — www.tabine.info — ALWAYS START HERE	PRIMARY <i>Course Pages</i> — www.tabine.info —	SECONDARY <i>(materials that require restricted access)</i> —bSpace—
<p>announcements</p> <p>links to course pages</p>	<p>sidebar: class policies, syllabus, assignment & test information, links to other Web site, etc.</p> <p>main window: class schedule or daily session page</p>	<p>course materials (texts, vocab glosses, sound files, powerpoints, etc.)</p> <p>unofficial grade postings*</p> <p>*If I have posted a grade to bSpace then for whatever reason changed the grade, the new grade will almost never appear on bSpace.</p>

Class announcements (Announcements Page: <http://www.tabine.info/~tabine/aa/calcrses/annc/annc.html>)

Where to look for announcements?

In the days and weeks before class begins, I might contact the class using the message tool on bSpace. These emails will go to enrolled and waitlisted students. At some point I “hand-off” announcements to my *Announcements Page* Web site with a class-wide email that says so. **The student now needs to navigate regularly to that Web page to read announcements. There will be no emails except under special circumstances.** After class stops I continue to use the *Announcements Page* for a while. At some point I again “hand off” the announcements back to bSpace and will say so when I do.

Announcements Page Web Site

- ◆ **Please check the Announcements Page frequently** beginning a few days before the start of the course until the end of finals week.
 - ◇ I will not introduce changes in what needs to be done for a class in the 24 hours prior to the class. However, I often upload shortly before a class (in the last few hours ahead of class), as I prepare to teach that session, additional information or web links that might be helpful for a class session.
- ◆ Remember **to refresh your browser** to insure you are seeing the updated version of the page on my Web site.

Class sessions schedule & content, deadlines (Course pages)

- ◆ **Please DO NOT download the Course Schedule / Outline or individual schedule pages:** You might miss grade-relevant, and other important announcements mentioned only on the Announcements Page and the schedule changes during the term.

Course materials (bSpace)

All material for this class that is not listed for purchase is provided as digital files, usually via bSpace. Please respect copyright laws. Course materials specifics are listed below.

General policies

On the sidebar of the Course Home Page are links to my policies about

- ... my efforts to be “green” in class operation (including an invitation to contact me if my policy is hindering your learning experience),
- ... laptop/tablet use in the classroom and all other types of multitasking, and
- ... **academic honesty**.

Please read them—some of the information there affects your grade.

Tolerance in the classroom

Discussions in this class frequently take up issues of national identity, religious views, chauvinist social practices, sexual mores, and

views of love. I speak frankly about religion and sex in the belief that we need to be clear about what we discuss. Please contact me right away if you feel offended or feel that your values seem unwelcome or unfairly challenged by me or other students. I want to challenge you to have a critical awareness your own beliefs, but I am committed to creating a class environment where you can express your opinions comfortably. I ask all students not to disparage explicitly or implicitly other students' ideas or the culture of any country, or flaunt linguistic skills.

As for films, by the way, all required movies are "R-rated" and do not include explicit scenes of sex or strong violence, by most definitions. There is one exception currently on the schedule: a film segment I might show early in the term and which will be pre-announced before presentation with students given the opportunity not to view it. As a team-member, you will not be required to view or analyze any film whose content is strongly objectionable to you nor discuss within your group topics that you consider too private to express openly.

English is the only official language of this class. Subtitles *are* the official text, as are English translations of any type. Please avoid suggesting that the subtitles are wrong or insufficient, or that anyone at anytime has less than perfect native ability, or engage in any other sort of behavior that displays your knowledge of a language in a way that might make others feel less capable. This is necessary to maintain a balance among the many languages and linguistic backgrounds of the students of this class. This is a difficult issue because it is definitely true that the original language carries not only more accurate information but also sometimes essential information regarding romance. Still, in order to achieve the goal of all students fully engaging all three countries of this course, we take English as the bridging language in every case.

A note on academic honesty

I am very attentive to issues about plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. **All students are expected to read carefully my full statement on these issues.** Access the Academic Honesty page through the sidebar. **Please read it in full by the end of the first week of the term.** Ask questions. **After a week I will assume you are fully aware of, and have understood thoroughly, its contents.**

Accommodation for students with disabilities

If you need accommodations for any physical, psychological, or learning disability or if you want me to have emergency medical information, please email me, or speak to me after class or during office hours.

Course materials

All the materials for this class are provided in digital form, via bSpace or other online resources.

Grades

General comments

- ◆ Students are always welcome to discuss with me concerns about grades. **If you use the correct course number at the beginning, your name, and "gradeissue" as a keyword in the email subject line your emails will be reviewed again before assigning a final course grade. I recommend this.** (Keywords are irregular word strings I request to be put in emails so that later I can use them as a search term. This is explained in my comments on emailing me, found through the Course Home Page sidebar.)
- ◆ **Some grades are reported to bSpace**, though this report might be several sessions after the grade is determined. bSpace is NOT the official grade book record. Also, **when I have discussed a grade with a student and changed it, these changes are almost never uploaded to bSpace.** (It is time inefficient to upload grades on an individual basis.)
- ◆ **All grades in all categories are either originally in or converted to a 12-pt scale where A = 12, A- = 11 and so on.** (See the charts at the end of this document.) This is also the way grades are communicated. To tell a student that s/he made a 12 on an assignment is to say that s/he received an "A". Test grades might initially have a raw and/or percent score but this is curved and given a letter grade and it is the letter grade, not the raw score or percent that counts towards the final grade.
- ◆ **Travel plans:** Students often schedule travel plans very close to class sessions. I do not consider missed flights, delayed or cancelled flights or inexpensive tickets to be excusable reasons for absences. I take our class sessions very seriously and hope you will, too. **I understand that students have various summer activities planned. The material covered in class can rarely be captured via just written notes. Keep that in mind when planning your summer. Also, I may or may not offer makeup opportunities for exams (the default is not to offer).**
- ◆ **Leaving early or arriving late because of midterms in other classes:** I do not consider this a valid reason for missing part of

the class. I do have sympathy with a student's desire to arrive early to a test room or when a test runs overtime. However, this explanation is so frequently abused that it is difficult to sort out those who legitimately need to do this and those who do not. Therefore, please email me ahead of time if possible and perhaps we can work something out.

- ◆ **I consider the final exam period a firm date.** Please do not ask to take an exam early because you have travel or moving plans. (This is a general statement, some of my classes do not use the final exam period.)
- ◆ **I basically never give incompletes in a class.**

About "graded activities" & "grade categories"

By "graded activities" I mean anything you do for the class that is given a grade. This includes attendance, class participation, quizzes, tests, written assignments, and so on.

I group graded **activities** under several **categories** to provide an overview of the type of work expected for the class and to create relative grade values for this work. Activities are sometimes curved when assigning a letter grade; categories are rarely adjusted beyond the mathematical formula used to generate that category grade but the structure is in place to do so. (For example, if in a category with multiple assignments the student shows evident increase in success on that type of assignment, the later submission might be viewed with more weight than earlier submissions. Or, if there was a personal event such as serious illness that skewed a grade, this might be considered when generating the category grade.)

The weight for each category grade and how the grade for a category is calculated are stated on this syllabus (unless there is only one item in the category meaning of course it equals the category grade). The rubric used to determine a grade for a particular activity is on the Course Web Page sidebar. Therefore, information on how I determine grades is split over these two places.

Please show some restraint in asking me to project a final grade for you towards the end of the term. (Basically I like all grade issues to be discussed in person. However, I understand that there might be times when this is not workable.) I will speak only in general terms, so if your question is, for example, whether I think you will get an "A" or an "A-", I can't answer that question. (This is true for P/NP students, too, when they are close to the borderline.) Also, if you are just curious, please wait for the reported grades. That being said, there are situations when such questions are legitimate. Please include "gradeissue" in your subject line. If I do not answer your email it either means that I don't think your situation warrants an answer or I am simply too busy to do so. I will give it serious consideration and respond as quickly as possible if appropriate. However, please remember that it will not be entirely accurate since there are many calculations involved in the final weeks, including balancing your performance against that of other students after all grades have been calculated (usually something that happens in the last 48-72 hours before grade submission). Estimating an individual grade before I have entered into the phase of considering the class as a whole is a time-consuming process since it is not just a matter of running numbers.

General description of graded activities for this class (details found via the Course Web page sidebar)

Grade Category—Midterms:

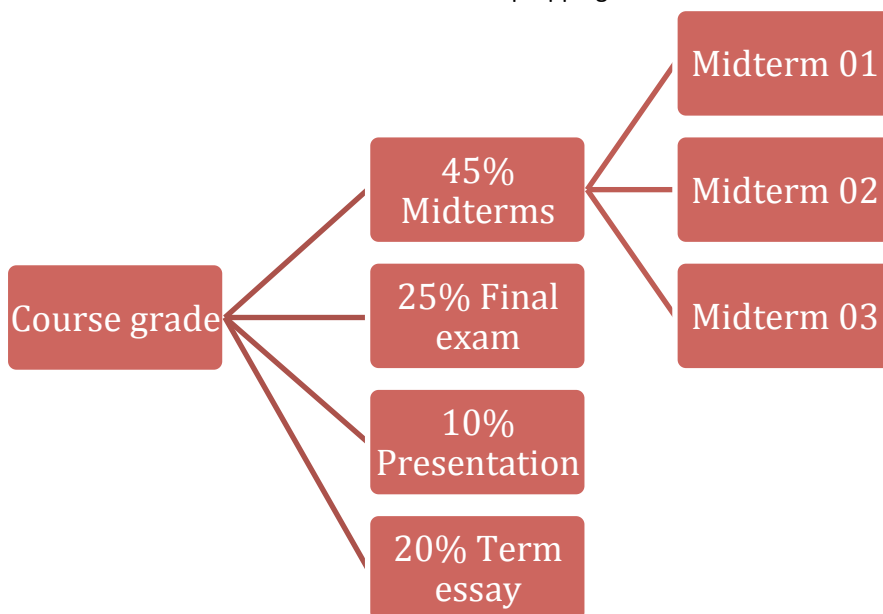
There are two in-class midterms. They will be primarily multiple choice and target for the most part factual information presented in class and in the assigned materials. You will find that this class is details-oriented and prepping for an exam can be a little bit of a challenge. While, in theory, the two exams are of equal weight, sometimes a student is caught off-guard by the first exam. A strong showing on the second exam will be taken into consideration when assigning the category grade.

Grade Category—Final:

There is a final in the class. It is comprehensive and essay question in style. The questions might be released ahead of time.

Grade Category—Presentation:

Each student must give a presentation during RRR week. It



will be brief but should be exceptionally clear and informative. The topic is more or less open. Details will be online, when available.

Grade Category—Term essay:

Each student is required to write an essay of moderate length (1,600-3,000 words) that compares the role of tea in a premodern political or cultural institution or phenomenon in two of three possible countries: China, Japan and Korea. Although an analytic comparison is preferred (considering similarities, differences and why these might be), a simple side-by-side comparison is sometimes the only possibility, depending on the topic (in China there was this, in Japan there was that). It is possible to write on a single topic within one country but it would need to be exceptional and the topic needs pre-approval by me.

Grade category—Extra Credit (on tests and such), Major Extra Credit (additional, substantial assignments), General Extra Credit (little things that you do), “A+” as course grade, and “gradeissue”:

I use three types of extra credit in my classes.

- ◆ The first is a type you are accustomed to encountering—**on assignments and tests** where students are given the opportunity to answer more challenging questions or include information beyond the usual expectations of the assignment. This type of extra credit influences directly the grade on the assignment.
- ◆ The second type you also sometimes see: **extra assignments** that include a challenge of some sort. I call this **“Major Extra Credit”** and identify the assignments as such. Completing Major Extra Credit in **excellent form** will change your final grade cutoff lines from n.5 to n.3. (Whereas in a usual scenario you must have a course final grade of 11.5 to round up to a 12, an “A”, for the class, under this scenario, your grade is rounded up to an “A” if you have 11.3 or higher.) Completing Major Extra Credit in **good form** will change your final grade cutoff lines from n.5 to n.4. (Whereas in a usual scenario you must have a course final grade of 11.5 to round up to a 12, an “A”, for the class, under this scenario, your graded is rounded up to an “A” if you have 11.4 or higher.) Completing Major Extra Credit **mechanically as if only done for the course grade** will not change your final grade cutoff lines. Some of my courses do not have major extra credit opportunities.
- ◆ The third type of extra credit is something more ineffable and you probably have not had this as an explicit grade category in your classes although I imagine it does work behind the scenes in some of your classes. These are little **things that you do that indicate an enthusiasm for the class**, or more than the usual attentiveness to assignments, or acts that help the teaching environment. This might be web links you find that are of special value, or an extended comment you send by email about something that interested you, or finding an error in my Web site or other instructions. I acknowledge these things with an email that includes the keyword **“extracredit”**. **This type of extra credit is only valuable if, one the whole, you seem to be participating very well in the class. It cannot replace assignments. Indeed, it might work against you if I conclude that you are only interested in your grade and believe the extra credit can substitute for work on the regular assignments. This is an opportunity to show enthusiasm and share ideas and help others, not polish your grade although, indirectly, it does have that effect sometimes.**

At the end of the term: In the gradebook, there are columns directly next to the final grade box. They list details for extra credit, various grade issues you have discussed with me (that have the gradeissue keyword in the subject line, no others), and notes I make during the term about you, such as multitasking during class, or special circumstances). After the grades are calculated the first time, I consider these issues.

I consider giving one or two “A+”s in a course. Extra credit is usually necessary to qualify being considered for this, and the content and quality of the extra credit is definitely a factor in choosing among students who are on the short list. I do not assign “A+”s strictly based on the highest final grade score.

Table: Equivalent of 12-pt scale numbers to letter grades

When a “12-pt scale” grade is reported on bSpace or elsewhere, the letter grade equivalent to that number is:

13 / A+	10 / B+	7 / C+	4 / D+
12 / A	9 / B	6 / C	3 / D
11 / A-	8 / B-	5 / C-	2 / D-
			0 / F

Table: How I convert 12-pt grade category grades to the letter grade reported to the University

At the end of the term, the 12-pt scores for each grade category are calculated together, according to weight, for the *initial* final grade. Then, each student’s result might have a further adjustment based on extra credit and gradeissue items for that specific student and might be affected by a class-wide adjustment of the scale below. Typically, I look carefully at the cutoff for A and for A-minus and see if the overall percent of As in the course, and ratio of As to A–s is an accurate reflection of the course.

Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the University	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the University	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the University	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the University
When given, usually highest 1-2 class averages, with general EC considered	A+	≥ 9.5	B+	≥ 6.5	C+	≥ 3.5	D+
	≥ 11.5 A	≥ 8.5	B	≥ 5.5	C	≥ 2.5	D
	≥ 10.5 A-	≥ 7.5	B-	≥ 5	Pass	≥ 1.5	D-
				< 5	No pass	< 1.5	F
				≥ 4.5	C-		

Table: My usual start point in defining cutoffs for grades when “percent correct” is the criterion used to determine a letter grade (multiple-choice tests and such). This is often modified to match better to the specific circumstance.

Usually above 100 unless several are, or top score(s)	A+	≥ 87	B+	≥ 77	C+	≥ 67	D+	< 60	F
	≥ 94 A	≥ 83	B	≥ 73	C	≥ 63	D		
	≥ 90 A-	≥ 80	B-	≥ 70	C-	≥ 60	D-		